

In the Claims:

Amend claim 1 and add new claim 29 as follows:

1.(currently amended)            A knife assembly comprising:

a knife having spaced-apart first and second sides defining a thickness of the knife;

a base;

a wearshoe;

an upper clamping member, said wearshoe for mounting to one side of said base and said upper clamping member for mounting to one the other side of said base[[,]] such that a first portion of said upper clamping member, corresponding to said first side of the knife, extends cantilevered over a corresponding second portion of said wearshoe, corresponding to said second side of the knife, so as to define a gap between said portions and said wearshoe for mounting to an opposite side of said base, said upper clamping member cantilevered from said base, said upper clamping member and said wearshoe having corresponding portions for receiving said first and second sides of said knife, respectively, said portions spaced apart by a gap that is greater than said thickness, for receiving the knife in a first configuration of the apparatus in which the knife is not clamped between said

~~portions so that said knife is not clamped between said portions, the apparatus adapted for elastically deflecting and thereby bending said upper clamping member to bring said portions closer together and narrow said gap until sufficient deflection is produced to entirely close said gap whereupon said portions clamp the knife; and~~

a gap reducing mechanism for elastically deflecting said first portion in the direction of said second portion so as to define a second configuration of the apparatus for clamping the knife in which said gap is reduced sufficiently to conform to said thickness.

2.(cancelled)

3.(previously presented)      The assembly of claim 1, further comprising at least one bolt mounting said wearshoe and base together, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively interlocking portions adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a first direction toward the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said interlocking portions meeting so as to define an angle  $\phi$  with respect to said first direction that is in the range 45 - 60 degrees.

4.(previously presented)      The assembly of claim 3, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively ramping portions defining an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said first

direction and adapted to resist movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a second direction opposite to said first direction.

5.(previously presented)      The assembly of claim 1, further comprising at least one bolt mounting said wearshoe and base together, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively ramping portions adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a direction away from the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said ramping portions defining an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said direction.

6. (cancelled)

7.(previously presented)      The ring slicer of claim 20, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively ramping portions defining an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said first direction and adapted to resist movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a second direction opposite said first direction.

8.(cancelled)

9.(previously presented)      An apparatus for cutting an article of wood, comprising:

a ring assembly comprising two end plates for rotation about an axis of rotation;

at least two shoulder bolts; and

a plurality of knife assemblies, each assembly comprising an elongate knife having a cutting edge extending along an elongate axis, a clamp for clamping the knife, and a base for supporting at least a portion of said clamp, said assemblies for installation between said end plates such that the shoulder portions of said at least two shoulder bolts extend through one of said end plates into said base.

10.(previously presented) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein each said clamp includes an upper clamping member for mounting to the corresponding base so that a portion of the upper clamping member is cantilevered therefrom, wherein the upper clamping member includes provision for at least one bolt extending through said portion into the base such that tightening the bolt elastically deflects said upper clamping member to bring the upper clamping member into contact with one side of the corresponding knife.

11.(previously presented) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein each said clamp further includes a wearshoe for mounting to said base and supporting the other side of the corresponding knife.

12.(cancelled)

13.(cancelled)

14.(cancelled)

15.(cancelled)

16.(cancelled)

17.(original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said knife includes dual cutting-edges.

18. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein said angle  $\theta$  is about 5 degrees.

19. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein said angle  $\theta$  is about 5 degrees.

20. (previously presented) A ring slicer, comprising:

a base;

a wearshoe;

at least one bolt mounting said wearshoe and base together at one side of said base; and

an upper clamping member for mounting engagement with said base at an opposite side of said base for clamping the knife between said upper clamping member and said wearshoe,

wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively interlocking portions adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a first direction toward the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said interlocking portions meeting so as to define an angle  $\phi$  with respect to said first direction that is in the range 45 - 60 degrees.

21. (previously presented) A ring slicer, comprising:

a base;

a wearshoe;

at least one bolt mounting said wearshoe and base together at one side of said base; and

an upper clamping member for mounting engagement with said base at an opposite side of said base for clamping the knife between said upper clamping member and said wearshoe, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively ramping portions adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a first direction away from the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said ramping portions defining an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said first direction about 5 degrees.

22. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising at least one bolt mounting said wearshoe and base together, wherein, for each said clamp, said wearshoe and base

include cooperatively interlocking portions adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a first direction toward the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said interlocking portions meeting so as to define an angle  $\phi$  with respect to said first direction that is in the range 45 - 60 degrees.

23. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively ramping portions defining an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said first direction and adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a second direction opposite said first direction.

24. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 23, wherein said angle  $\theta$  is about 5 degrees.

25. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising at least one bolt mounting said wearshoe and base together, wherein, for each said clamp, said wearshoe and base include cooperatively ramping portions adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a direction away from the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said ramping portions defining an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said direction.

26. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said angle  $\theta$  is about 5 degrees.

27. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said knife includes dual cutting-edges.

28. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said knife includes dual cutting-edges.

29 (new). The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said gap reducing mechanism comprises a bolt adapted to extend through a hole in said upper clamping member and to be received in a threaded hole in said base.